



Frequently Asked Questions related to the possible alignment of TraceCore XML with EPCIS

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Steinar Kjærnsrød

TraceTracker Innovation



Official EPCIS FAQ

A number of general questions and answers (independent of TCX → EPCIS discussion) can be found in the official FAQ:

http://www.epcglobalinc.org/standards/epcis/epcis_1_0-faq-20070427.pdf

Q & A : RFID?

Do I have to use RFID to use the EPCglobal standards?

- No, EPC and EPCIS are not only about RFID. The higher level standards can be used independently of any specific data capture technology, but when using an RFID infrastructure, additional benefits are achieved through the EPC framework

Q & A: GS1 numbers only?

Do I have to use GS1 based numbers to use the EPCIS standard?

- No, any proprietary coding scheme can be used within the standards. However, GS1 numbers and a couple of other standard numbering schemes are pre-defined in the core vocabularies and will therefore potentially provide more meaning and semantics to applications using the standards

Q & A: Do I have to become a GS1 member (#1)?

Do I have to become a GS1 member or EPCglobal member to use the EPCIS standard?

- No, the ratified standards are published on the EPCglobal web site and free to use
- You do not need an association with GS1 or EPCglobal to:
 - Create your own EPCIS implementation
 - Use any EPCIS implementation
 - Read EPC data from business partners
 - Send EPC data to business partners

Q & A: Do I have to become a GS1 member (#2)?

Do I have to become a GS1 member or EPCglobal member to use the EPC Tag Data Standard?

- You *do not* need to be member of GS1 or EPCglobal to use EPC data from other parties
- You *have to* be a GS1 member to create your own EPCs derived from the GS1 System identifiers. The reason is that you need to register a global namespace. This is similar to getting an official Internet domain name when you want to communicate on the Internet
- You *may have to* be member of EPCglobal to create your own standardized RFID tags following the EPCglobal standards

Q & A: Extension mechanisms?

Can I reference and use my own data dictionaries and vocabularies with EPCIS?

- Yes, EPCIS standards were made with extensions in mind from day #1.
- The extension mechanisms are well specified and have already been used by several pilots running in different industries, for instance in FMCG and Health Care

Q & A: Master Data?

I have external master data I want to use with my event data, can I do that?

- Yes, EPCIS makes a very clear distinction between master data and normal transactional data ("event data")
- The EPCIS Query Interface defines a query for retrieving master data, but leaves the capture of master data out of the spec
- Master data anatomy can be specified through user vocabularies and XML Schemas, but it must be up to the applications of master data to interpret the meaning

Q & A: EPC Event model imposes challenges?

In the EPCIS event model, event time is a required field, but I have no data capture infrastructure to supply that?

- This is a known challenge. There are ways to handle this situation, but some timestamp must be set in that field, for instance current time of day, time of data capture etc
- By using EPC extension mechanisms, it is possible to "tag" this situation such that for instance a "TraceCore" aware application is able to detect this situation and only use the time field in the right context
- A "pure" EPC application may not be able to make any sense out of the recorded time though

Q & A: EPCIS and batch transformations

Can I model internal traceability and batch transformations in the EPCIS data model?

- This is not part of the current ratified standard, but several initiatives are looking into how this can be handled, for instance through the extension mechanisms
- A standard way of using these extensions could be the added value TraceCore XML provides



Steinar Kjærnsrød

CTO, TraceTracker Innovation

Tel: +47-9288-7988

E-mail: steinar@tracetracker.com

Web: www.tracetracker.com